

## VIII. Findings

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*“any findings or recommendations that are deemed proper to assist the legislature in formulating legislation;”*

### Update M.S. 116P Peer Review for Research Projects

Revision reflects current academic practices of the use of electronic technology to obtain peer review in place of the physical meeting of a peer review panel. The peer review standards are consistent with past practices. The result is an increase in efficiency and reduced costs.



39.1 Sec. 3. Minnesota Statutes 2014, section 116P.05, subdivision 2, is amended to read:

39.2 Subd. 2. **Duties.** (a) The commission shall recommend an annual or biennial  
39.3 legislative bill for appropriations from the environment and natural resources trust fund and  
39.4 shall adopt a strategic plan as provided in section 116P.08. Approval of the recommended  
39.5 legislative bill requires an affirmative vote of at least 12 members of the commission.

39.6 (b) It is a condition of acceptance of the appropriations made from the Minnesota  
39.7 environment and natural resources trust fund, and oil overcharge money under section  
39.8 4.071, subdivision 2, that the agency or entity receiving the appropriation must  
39.9 submit a work plan and semiannual progress reports in the form determined by the  
39.10 Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources, and comply with applicable  
39.11 reporting requirements under section 116P.16. None of the money provided may be  
39.12 spent unless the commission has approved the pertinent work plan. Modifications to  
39.13 the approved work plan and budget expenditures shall be made through the amendment  
39.14 process established by the commission. The commission shall ensure that the expenditures  
39.15 and outcomes described in the work plan for appropriations funded by the environment  
39.16 and natural resources trust fund are met.

39.17 (c) The peer review ~~panel~~ procedures created under section 116P.08 must also be  
39.18 used to review, comment, and report to the commission on research proposals applying for  
39.19 an appropriation from the oil overcharge money under section 4.071, subdivision 2.

39.20 (d) The commission may adopt operating procedures to fulfill its duties under this  
39.21 chapter.

39.22 (e) As part of the operating procedures, the commission shall:

39.23 (1) ensure that members' expectations are to participate in all meetings related to  
39.24 funding decision recommendations;

39.25 (2) recommend adequate funding for increased citizen outreach and communications  
39.26 for trust fund expenditure planning;

39.27 (3) allow administrative expenses as part of individual project expenditures based  
39.28 on need;

39.29 (4) provide for project outcome evaluation;

39.30 (5) keep the grant application, administration, and review process as simple as  
39.31 possible; and

39.32 (6) define and emphasize the leveraging of additional sources of money that project  
39.33 proposers should consider when making trust fund proposals.

39.34 Sec. 4. Minnesota Statutes 2014, section 116P.08, subdivision 5, is amended to read:

40.1 Subd. 5. **Public meetings.** (a) Meetings of the commission, committees or  
 40.2 subcommittees of the commission, technical advisory committees, and peer review panels  
 40.3 reviewers must be open to the public. The commission shall attempt to meet throughout  
 40.4 various regions of the state during each biennium. For purposes of this subdivision, a  
 40.5 meeting occurs when a quorum is present and action is taken regarding a matter within  
 40.6 the jurisdiction of the commission, a committee or subcommittee of the commission, a  
 40.7 technical advisory committee, or a peer review panel reviewers.

40.8 (b) For legislative members of the commission, enforcement of this subdivision is  
 40.9 governed by section 3.055, subdivision 2. For nonlegislative members of the commission,  
 40.10 enforcement of this subdivision is governed by section 13D.06, subdivisions 1 and 2.

40.11 Sec. 5. Minnesota Statutes 2014, section 116P.08, subdivision 6, is amended to read:

40.12 Subd. 6. **Peer review.** (a) Research proposals must include a stated purpose directly  
 40.13 connected to the trust fund's constitutional mandate, this chapter, and the adopted strategic  
 40.14 plan under subdivision 3, a timeline, potential outcomes, and an explanation of the need  
 40.15 for the research. All research proposals must be peer reviewed by a peer review panel  
 40.16 before receiving an appropriation.

40.17 (b) In conducting research proposal reviews, the peer review panel reviewers shall:

40.18 (1) comment on the methodology proposed and whether it can be expected to yield  
 40.19 appropriate and useful information and data; and

40.20 (2) comment on the need for the research and about similar existing information  
 40.21 available, if any; and.

40.22 ~~(3) report to the commission on clauses (1) and (2)~~ (c) Peer reviewers' comments  
 40.23 under paragraph (b) must be reported to the commission.

40.24 ~~(e) (d)~~ The peer review panel also must reviewers may review completed research  
 40.25 proposals that have received an appropriation and comment and report upon whether the  
 40.26 project reached the intended goals.

40.27 Sec. 6. Minnesota Statutes 2014, section 116P.08, subdivision 7, is amended to read:

40.28 Subd. 7. **Peer review panel membership reviewers.** (a) The peer review panel  
 40.29 reviewers must consist of at least five members who are be knowledgeable in general  
 40.30 research methods in the areas of environment and natural resources. ~~Not more than two~~  
 40.31 ~~members of the panel may be employees of state agencies in Minnesota.~~

40.32 (b) ~~The commission shall select a chair every two years who shall be responsible for~~  
 40.33 ~~convening meetings of the panel as often as is necessary to fulfill its duties as prescribed~~

41.1 ~~in this section.~~ Compensation of ~~panel members~~ peer reviewers is governed by section  
41.2 15.059, subdivision 3.

41.3 Sec. 7. Minnesota Statutes 2014, section 116P.09, subdivision 6, is amended to read:

41.4 Subd. 6. **Conflict of interest.** A commission member, a technical advisory  
41.5 committee member, a peer review ~~panelist~~ reviewer, or an employee of the commission  
41.6 may not participate in or vote on a decision of the commission, advisory committee, or  
41.7 peer review ~~panel~~ relating to an organization in which the member, ~~panelist~~ peer reviewer,  
41.8 or employee has either a direct or indirect personal financial interest. While serving on the  
41.9 commission, technical advisory committee, ~~or as a peer review panel reviewer~~, or being  
41.10 an employee of the commission, a person shall avoid any potential conflict of interest.

41.11 Sec. 8. Minnesota Statutes 2014, section 116P.09, subdivision 8, is amended to read:

41.12 Subd. 8. **Technical advisory committees.** The commission shall make use of  
41.13 available public and private expertise on environment and natural resource issues ~~by~~  
41.14 ~~appointing and may appoint~~ necessary technical advisory committees to review funding  
41.15 proposals and evaluate project outcomes. Compensation for technical advisory committee  
41.16 members is governed by section 15.059, subdivision 6.

